

# TOURISM DEPARTMENT-23



*Discover Wisconsin Photo Shoot on  
the Namekagon*



*Bull Riding Entertainment  
at the Fair*

## BUDGET SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

The proposed 2019 budget for the Tourism Department, including the fair is \$395,725, down .2% from 2018. Revenues are estimated at \$162,250. The proposed levy is \$233,475 a .6% decrease. A reduction of \$2500 was made in the advertising line.

## FUNCTION:

- Strengthen the economic well-being of the County by actively promoting responsible year-round tourism
- Facilitate communication amongst tourism entities both within the county and statewide
- Plan, coordinate and carry out the Bayfield County Fair

## MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

### MARKETING

Increase visitor expenditures in Bayfield County and continue to grow a strong and healthy, year-round tourism economy through development of a brand strategy, media relations, travel publications, website, social media and response to direct inquiries. This department also supports and encourages sustainable economic tourism development through regional partnerships within the industry and coordinates travel writer visits to the area.

### FAIR

Plan and coordinate all aspects of the Bayfield County Fair including entertainment, exhibitors, judges, volunteers, gate workers, parking, sponsors, vendors and other details. Prepare and submit reports to the State Fair Coordinator per state statute. Carry out Capital Improvement plans for the fairgrounds. Staff includes a 62% Fair Coordinator and seasonal

maintenance staff. Coordinate use and rental of fairgrounds and Winter Storage. Participate in and host District meetings of the WI Association of Fairs (WAF) and attend the annual WAF Convention.

## 2018 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

### Marketing

- Represented the Tourism department at multiple events throughout Bayfield County
- Recorded a monthly podcast featuring local recreation assets and interviews with businesses from the area
- Maintained an active Facebook Page with 5,018 “Likes” (20% increase from last year)
- Partnered with Cable and Hayward Chambers and MMC on a Discover Wisconsin episode that will air in Feb. 2019
- Worked with multiple departments to facilitate flood response communications
- Helped to coordinate inter-agency logistics planning meetings in preparation for a potential Ice Caves event
- Sponsored a show at Big Top Chautauqua
- Produced a 48-page Visitor & Recreation Guide; distributed 50,000 copies to the surrounding area as well as to over 300 locations in Minnesota and Wisconsin; self-supporting through advertising sales
- Produced a new ATV/UTV Trail Map; self-supporting through advertising sales
- Partnered with Ashland County Tourism to:
  - Receive a Joint Effort Marketing Grant for \$10,000 to promote a “Winter Wellness” trails initiative
  - Distribute the 2-county Bike Map supported by advertising sales
  - Provide a 2-county map for use by area information centers when giving directions
- Participated in monthly meetings of the NW ITBEC Tourism Committee for regional tourism promotion
- Partnered with 4 other counties from northwest WI on a \$39,000 JEM grant to promote the Namekagon River
- Attended Governor’s Conference on Tourism
- Interviewed multiple times by regional media for tourism-related topics
- Contributed photos and editorial for numerous articles and media requests
- Worked with Scenic Byway Marketing Committee to promote the WI Lake Superior Scenic Byway
- Updated the Tourism department and visitor pages on the county website ([www.travelbayfieldcounty.com](http://www.travelbayfieldcounty.com)); also updated Bayfield County Tourism information on other websites
- Hosted visits from the WI Dept. of Tourism Regional Tourism Specialist to tour Bayfield County’s tourism assets
- Participated in the annual regional meeting of tourism professionals at the beginning of the summer season
- Met with legislators and staff of various state and federal agencies to discuss tourism-related issues
- Worked with our Forestry and Parks department staff on many recreation issues and projects

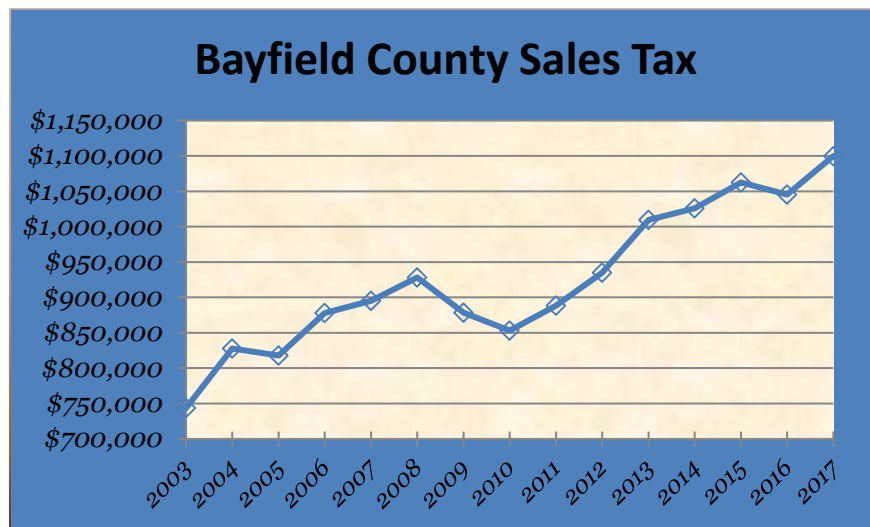
### Information Requests

We have seen a significant increase in some requests in 2018 compared to this time in 2017:

- Big Top brochure requests are up 28%
- Camping brochure requests are up 66%
- County map requests are up 24%
- WI Lake Superior Scenic Byway map requests are up 30%

## Sales Tax

The overall trend continues and sales tax revenues are over \$1 million for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row.



## Fair

- Rented the fairgrounds to organizations for 9 separate horse shows throughout the summer bringing in revenue of over \$7,000 (a 17% increase over last year)
- Secured 36 sponsorships for a total of \$16,975 in donations (\$9,650 in cash; \$7,325 in kind); an increase of 30%
- Facilitated numerous capital improvement projects including shower tile replacement in the main restroom building
- 40 Individuals for winter storage with 41 items stored for a total of over \$8,000 in revenue (33% increase)
- Submitted information & photos for the 4H newsletter periodically throughout the year
- Communicated with fairgoers via the Bayfield County Fair Facebook page (2,032 “Likes” – an 8% increase over last year at this time)

## Additional

- President of the Friends of the Center Alliance and member of the Board of Directors of the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (NGLVC)

## 2019 GOALS:

- Increase annual Sales Tax Revenue by 5%
- Provide leadership and guidance to Bayfield County’s tourism industry
- Develop a positive image of the tourism industry and the industry’s impact of the area economy and quality of life
- Strengthen quality of user experience on Bayfield County website and other electronic communication tools
- Take advantage of new tourism trends and opportunities
- Increase attendance at the Bayfield County Fair
- Increase use of the facilities at the fairgrounds by groups throughout the summer